



CONGRESSMAN
**FRANK
PALLONE**



MONMOUTH COUNTY REPORT

Protecting Our Ocean

Pallone Works to Improve Ocean Policy

Over the last several years, we have scored several major victories for the Jersey Shore. We are making great progress toward safeguarding our coastline from ocean dumping and off-shore drilling

However, the struggle continues to protect New Jersey's oceans, rivers and fragile coastal environment from mercury and other harmful pollutants.

Fixing Our Ocean Policy

As the senior Democrat on the House Fisheries, Wildlife and Oceans Subcommittee, I am working on ways we can better protect our oceans and coastline.

Earlier this year, the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy released a review of our nation's oceans policy. The report sent a clear message that can no longer be denied: unless major changes are made in the way we manage our oceans they will continue to be jeopardized by pollution, over fishing, and habitat destruction. The report calls for immediate reform of U.S. ocean laws and policies to restore ocean wildlife, protect ocean ecosystems, and preserve the ecological, economic, and social benefits the oceans provide.

Right now, I am focused on fighting any efforts that would weaken rules allowing New Jersey and other

states to protect their coastlines from offshore development, including unwanted gas or oil exploration. It's important states continue to make any decisions regarding off-shore development.

Pallone Holds Public Meeting on Mercury in Trenton

In April, I held a public meeting in Trenton to discuss the public health, environmental, and economic impact mercury pollution is having on our state.

The Bush Administration recently proposed a new environmental rule that could mean an increase in mercury pollution for New Jersey. More than a third of the mercury deposited on New Jersey's land and waters comes from coal-fired power plants and incinerators downwind of our state. The Administration's proposed rule would weaken mercury regulations for these plants and allow them to delay implementing clean air standards mandated by current law.

The adverse health effects of mercury are well documented. During the meeting, we heard from public health advocates on the serious health risk mercury poses to pregnant women and women of childbearing age. Environmental and fisheries experts also discussed how high lev-

els of mercury pollution in New Jersey's waters have resulted in state-wide fish consumption advisories and how these advisories are a threat to coastal communities that depend on tourism revenues from recreational fishing.

I then submitted all statements from the mercury meeting to the EPA in Washington. Thanks to the sharp criticism of concerned residents, the Administration has delayed making a final decision on the rule until December.

Pallone Secures Funds for Beach Replenishment Projects

Recently, funds I requested for shore protection projects were approved by the House and are awaiting approval by the Senate.

The House approved my request of \$500,000 in federal funds to place sand on beaches along the Atlantic coast of Monmouth County that were previously replenished but lost sand in the last few years. The Bush Administration provided no funding for this type of renourishment.

Projects along the Bayshore in Monmouth County also received additional funding beyond the Administration's request. My requests to increase funding for all projects currently in the engineering and design phase were met, including:

- ▲ Union Beach: \$100,000
- ▲ Leonardo: \$250,000
- ▲ Highlands: \$250,000
- ▲ Keypoint: \$200,000



Pallone, left, hears from state officials, public health specialists and environmental experts at a public meeting in Trenton on mercury pollution.

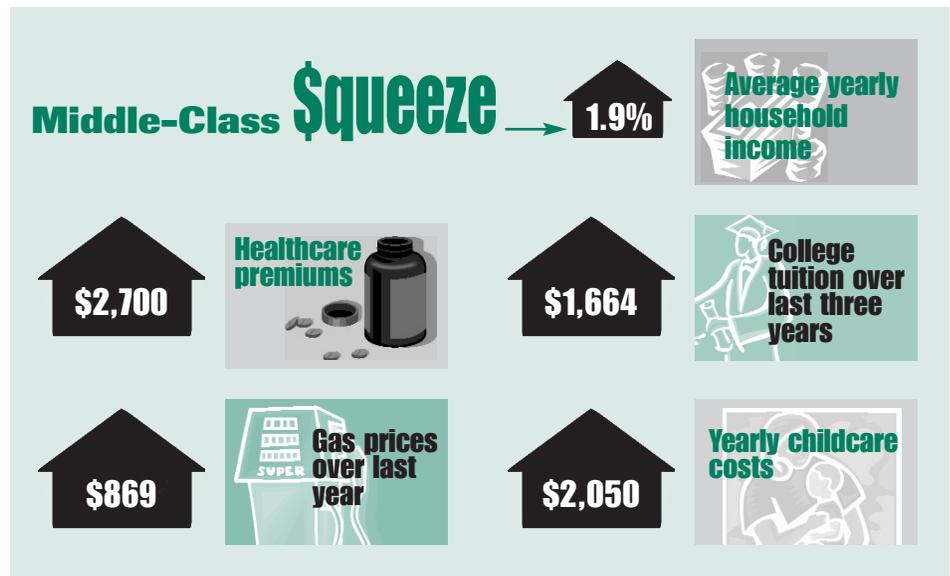
Middle-Class Families Feeling the "Squeeze"

Middle-class Americans notice their paycheck doesn't stretch as far as it used to. While the White House insists the economy is improving, many Americans are wondering what happened to the higher wages normally associated with a recovery.

Over the past three years, wages have only increased an average of 1.9 percent, while healthcare, college tuition, childcare and gasoline costs have increased by \$6,283.

See chart 

I'm fighting for four economic provisions that would help workers by: eliminating tax incentives that ship jobs overseas, enacting a high-way bill that creates 1.8 million high-paying jobs, providing a healthcare tax credit to small businesses so they can provide health insurance to their employees, and reducing healthcare costs.



Pallone Fights for Fort Monmouth

Working with my Save Our Fort Committee, I am continuing my work to ensure that Fort Monmouth will be safe from the upcoming round of military base closures set for 2005.

I recently secured \$2 million in federal funds for Fort Monmouth that will allow the fort to upgrade its telecommunications infrastructure. These funds, along with the \$5 million appropriated to the fort over the last two years, will ensure that Fort Monmouth has the most

up-to-date, cutting edge telecommunications system in the military.

Fort Monmouth has established itself as a national leader in the areas of homeland defense and security. Fort Monmouth is also home to the FEMA auxiliary command center that goes into action in the event a terrorist attack or national emergency threatens the FEMA center in New York. The state also plans to locate a similar auxiliary command center at the

fort. At a recent conference on homeland security, which I coordinated with Governor McGreevey and the fort, the fort announced joint projects with the Department of Homeland Security, FEMA, the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) of New York and other state and federal agencies. The agencies are looking to utilize the fort's state-of-the-art communications center and its ideal location to better coordinate homeland security efforts around the state and region.

Rep. Pallone's District Offices — Reaching Out to You

If you have a problem of a federal nature or want to obtain information on legislative issues, contact these offices, open weekdays 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

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